

## ANCESTORS OF MARY ASTON OF SEDGLEY

Mary Aston married Joseph Aston 16 November 1735 in Sedgley. This page describes the Aston ancestors of Mary Aston.



*Beacon Tower, Sedgley*

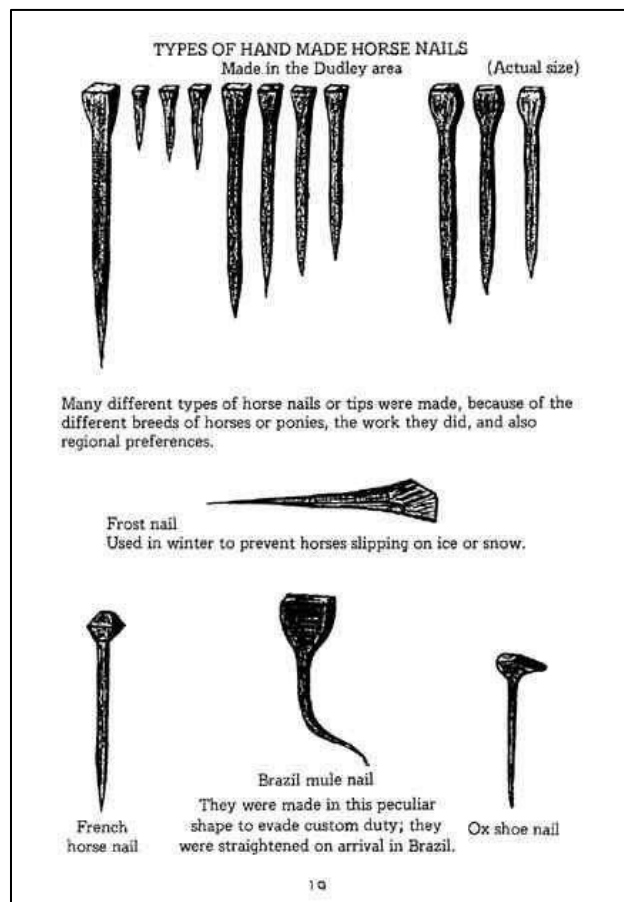
### FAMILY GROUP RECORD OF EDWARD ASTON AND MARGARET SMALLMAN

Edward Aston was christened 14 December 1690 in Sedgley, Staffordshire, England, the son of Joseph and Elizabeth Aston. He married Margaret Smallman 1 May 1716 in Sedgley. Both were listed as "*of this parish*" at the time of their marriage.

Margaret was christened 23 October 1699 in Kingswinford, Staffordshire, the daughter of Thomas Smallman and Sarah Brown.

Edward worked as a nailor, or nail maker. An article on the nail trade in the Black Country says: "*The beginning of the nail trade in the Black Country and other parts of the surrounding areas are lost in antiquity. Reference to nails being made go back as far as the 12th century. The trade was always domestic in character, the nails being made in small workshops either attached to, or close to, the nailer's house. In the early times, that is up to about the 17th century, the nail trade would have been mainly a part-time occupation along with agriculture, with nails being made in times of bad weather and in winter. The improvement of slitting the iron into bars early in the 17th century helped stimulate the nail trade. Improvements in the blast furnaces and the change from charcoal to coal made the nail trade competitive. Richard Reynolds wrote in a letter about 1760 and said that, "The nail trade would have been lost to this country had it not been found practical to make nails of iron made with pit-coal". Trade with Sweden ceased in 1717 because of Britain's improvement in the northern war and the stopping of the most important centre of ironmaking in Europe was a great help to the Black Country iron industry. During most of the 18th century the nail trade was prosperous partly due to the amount sent to the American*

colonies which were not allowed to compete with the mother country. At the time of the war of independence the loss of trade hit nailmaking very hard although trade increased later. Around 1810 there was another decline in the American trade owing to the political situation, William Whitehouse giving evidence before a House of Commons Select Committee in 1812 said "Any person who knew the quantity of nails required in America would be surprised unless he saw the immense number of houses built of wood in that country". Around this time machinery for nailmaking was being developed, first the cast nail in 1780, and in 1811 cut nails began to be manufactured in Birmingham. By 1830 they were being produced in large numbers, Hand-made nails were also being imported in increasing amounts from Belgium adding to the distress of the nailers. During the "Hungry Forties" the people in the nail trade suffered terribly and by 1842 many of them were dying of starvation." (*The Black Country Nail Trade* by Arthur Willets, online at [www.sedgleymanor.com](http://www.sedgleymanor.com)) Often the entire family would be involved in making nails, including children seven years old and up.



Edward and Margaret had the following children:

1. **Benjamin**, christened 22 September 1717 in Ettingshall, Sedgley parish; buried 8 February 1797 in Sedgley.
2. **Daniel**, christened 5 June 1718 in Sedgley; died 8 July 1718.

\*3. **Mary**, christened 24 May 1719 in Sedgley, of Ettingshall; married Joseph Aston 16 December 1735 in Sedgley.

4. **Amos**, christened 12 February 1721 in Sedgley, of Ettingshall; married Mary; worked as a lineman.

5. **Abel**, christened 21 July 1723 in Sedgley; married Elianor; worked as a limer; buried 2 April 1801 in Sedgley, of Ettingshall.

6. **Abraham**, christened 21 March 1725 in Sedgley, of Ettingshall; married Hannah; worked as a lineman.

7. **Aaron**, christened 18 December 1726 in Sedgley, of Ettingshall; married Mary.

8. **Absalom**, christened 25 July 1731 in Sedgley, of Ettingshall; married Eleanor Langston 2 February 1756 in Sedgley.

*SOURCE: Sedgley parish register, FHL# 1040788.*

### **FAMILY GROUP RECORD OF JOSEPH AND ELIZABETH ASTON**

Joseph Aston was born in about 1655 of Ettingshall. No christening record has been found for him, but the only Aston family having children at this time in Sedgley were Robert and Ann Aston. Robert was the son of Owen Aston, and information about Robert and Owen is found on the *Aston Ancestors* page. Robert and Ann Aston are most likely Joseph's parents. Joseph worked as a collier. He married Elizabeth.

Joseph and Elizabeth had the following children:

1. **Hannah**, christened 4 February 1679 in Sedgley. (At the time of this christening, Joseph's occupation is shown as a nailor.)

2. **Daniell**, christened 23 May 1681 in Sedgley; of Coseley.

3. **Joseph**, christened 23 December 1683 in Sedgley, of Coseley.

4. **Edward**, christened 30 September 1686 in Sedgley.

5. **John**, christened 15 July 1688 in Sedgley.

\*6. **Edward**, christened 14 December 1690 in Sedgley; married Margaret Smallman 1 May 1716 in Sedgley.

7. **Elizabeth**, christened 18 February 1693 in Sedgley, of Ettingshall.

*SOURCE: Sedgley parish register, FHL# 1040788.*